

**AMHERST REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**  
**MINUTES**  
**November 4, 2010**

**LOCATION:** Glass Room, Bangs Community Center

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** John Coull, Aaron Hayden, Lawrence Kelley, Margaret Roberts.

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Joan Burgess, Hwei-Ling Greeney, Winnifred Manning, Elissa Rubinstein, [UMass officials] Dennis Swinford (UMass Director of Campus Planning), Todd Diacon (Deputy Chancellor), Nancy Buffone, Lisa Queenin

**STAFF PRESENT:** Jonathan Tucker (Planning Director).

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Mr. Coull called the meeting to order at 7:37 p.m. Ms. Burgess audio-taped the meeting.

Announcements- None.

Executive Session

At 7:39 p.m., a unanimous (4-0) roll call vote was held to go into Executive Session, following which the Authority would return to open public session.

At 7:56 p.m., the Authority voted unanimously by roll call vote to come out of the Executive Session and return to public session.

Minutes

After discussion, Mrs. Roberts moved to approve the minutes of September 29, 2010 with minor amendments. Mr. Kelley seconded and the motion passed unanimously (4-0).

Consideration of the minutes of September 22, 2010 was postponed until Ms. Traester could be present.

Old Business

Mr. Tucker distributed and described information regarding downtown revitalization and student housing planning in Saratoga Springs, NY. He noted that the Authority had asked to continue to see information from new communities while it was waiting for responses to the visioning RFP.

There was discussion of an upcoming site visit to North Apartments at UMass. Mr. Coull said that there was strong concern that the Gateway project could not accommodate a large component of student housing. Higher end, higher-priced housing seemed to make sense for some part of the mix.

Mr. Coull asked if the RFP deadline was still set for December 3. Mr. Tucker said that date was becoming less sure.

New Business – None.

#### Public Questions & Comments

Ms. Rubinstein expressed appreciation for the development of the Citizens Concerns to Date summary. She asked if it was posted online yet. Mr. Tucker replied that it was being updated as new minutes were approved, and was not yet online.

She asked if the summary would be made available to the visioning consultant. Mr. Tucker said that it would.

L. Michael Alpert asked if North Apartments, which had been down-sized by half as a result of an economic downturn, could be expanded in the future to accommodate more undergraduate housing on campus.

Todd Diacon answered that UMass's plan was to increase its undergraduate population from 16,500 to about 22,500 by 2020. He emphasized that UMass did not need student housing in the Gateway project to accomplish that. He said at present UMass has about 1,400 acres to build on, but insufficient funds to do so. UMass never proposed that the Gateway project serve as a principle solution for UMass's housing needs.

Mr. Diacon said that UMass thought it, the Town, and the ARA working together could create a win-win situation in the Gateway. It could include: 1) higher end student housing to attract a specific population of high quality students, and 2) an interesting mixed use development connecting the campus and the downtown that students and especially their parents would see as an attractive, aesthetically pleasing setting. It would help UMass with its recruiting of new students.

Hwei-Ling Greeney spoke on behalf of the Committee on Homelessness, saying that the committee was very concerned about the fate of the former boarding house (Mount Pleasant Inn) at 336 North Pleasant Street, and an associated property. It had been a target for a potential single-room-occupancy project for homeless individuals, and had been appraised at \$1.35 million. It was her impression that the Town Manager does not want to commit the Town to any homeless project there because the properties were in the Gateway area and the visioning process had not yet been conducted. She asked the ARA to confirm whether or not these properties would be of interest to the Gateway project, and whether they would be considered for affordable housing.

Mr. Coull replied that the properties would be under scrutiny as part of the visioning process.

### Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

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Laurence Kelley, Clerk

Approved:

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John Coull, ARA Chair

List of documents available at the meeting:

- Draft minutes for September 22 and 29
- A web-based article on downtown Saratoga Springs entitled “Downtown Housing – Minis Parking + Plus Commercial” [ <http://www.circletheuse.com/2009/04/downtown-saratoga.html> ]
- An October 28 newspaper article from The Saratogian describing plans for new dormitories for Skidmore College, by Patrick H. Donges.
- A summary entitled, “Gateway Corridor Project: Citizen Concerns to Date” current as of the August 25, 2010 ARA meeting.